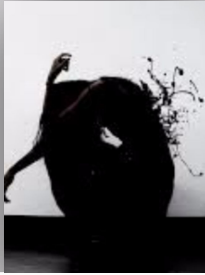




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Darkness: The New Queen Of Hell.

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Chapter 1 by Maleesha Mcadoo

"But mom!," I wail dragging my feet against the cold cobblestone floor. "No Zafrina! You are a princess and it's time you start acting like one!," Mother snaps pulling my arm to the great hall where father is waiting. I struggle to get away to move far away but I couldn't. Or could I? I look at mother and snark, " If you make me go out there I will tell them your dirty secret". Mother gasps and pulls me close leaning in my face snarling, " And what would that be?" "Don't play dumb. You know as well as me that I'm not your child. I'm just a cheap knock-off you stole to replace your kid," I spat. Suddenly I was on the floor my cheek stinging from the slap she gave me. "You listen to me, you are 17 years old and damn it you will act like so,!" Mother snapped walking away leaving me in the doorway of the sillia, the gateway that lead to earth as well as any planet we so choose. "Well if I can't change hell down here I will make hell on earth," I smile stepping into the sillia, "Where to princess Zafrina?" the machine spoke in it's monotone voice. "Earth, sillia, earth," I say as I journey towards earth.....

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As the vessel travels to earth from the dark blue hull the lights of silver and metallic blues pulsing by inside the tank top.

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I feel the gust of wind as the vessel disappears around me and I find myself in an alley in what seems like a hot summer day. The vessel seems to have morphed itself into a watch on my wrist.

I begin to walk out of the alley when an elderly homeless person yells at me.

"Hey!, did I just see that? Did that just happen?" He rubs his eyes and looks at me then at the bottle in his hands and back at me.

"Maybe it's time to put that down." I tell him.

He takes a look at the bottle in his hand again and tosses it into the nearby garbage dumpster.

"Good job!" I say to him as I exit the alley and begin walking down the busy Manhattan sidewalk.

Chapter 3 by Broken Doll



The sun pounds down on my head, warming me from head to toe. The city is full of anomalous, thunderous noises. As I walk I see engrossing pigments and flashing lights before me.

SCREECH!! "Lady watch where you're gonna!! Move out of the street," a sweat covered man yells from a yellow vehicle. I look at him confused like a puppy when its head is tilted. Realizes this must not be normal human behavior I keep walking.

After some time, I cut into an ally way to escape the bizarre faces painted with various emotions. As I walk further into the alley I sense something off. "Maybe mother found me," I say as I quicken my pace. My nervousness doesn't fade, a cold sweat starts down my back. Not wanting to turn around I start into a quick sprint. I turn down about five ally ways till finally I'm at a dead end.

I put my hands on my knees to catch my breath. A warm callus hand grips my shoulder. It was a hand known for blood-shed of innocent. I turn around and stare my stalker in the face. It was ,Kaltur, my best friend from childhood. He was hand-picked by the Queen herself for his hunting skill and agility. In our world he was known to slaughter people, who the Queen ordered him to. He never got to know the reason behind it. He was stuck in the dark like the rest of the Queen's loyal subjects.

Till we both found out why the Queen replaced my dead daughter with an ordinary village girl. They both found the Queen's weakness. Both bound to tearing the Queen down, even if it meant losing each other. The only thing she couldn't put together was Kaltur's presence.

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Chapter 4 by Maleesha Mcadoo

I snatch away from him debating whether to be offended or angry, maybe both. "What are you doing here?!" he says angrily. What does HE have to be angry for? I don't answer instead I snark, "I could ask you the same thing". Kaltur drags a hand down his face looking up as if to ask the skies 'why me?'. After a period of time, though, he says, "You know why I'm here Ze, what I don't understand is why you are here. This is earth you know." "Yes I know that. But what I can't do is go back to that woman who isn't even my real parent. She- I-" "We both know that you aren't a ordinary village girl Ze. But you never told her did you?". I frowned at this. I never did tell her. I never did tell her that I was her biological child who staged death to leave. But she wouldn't believe

me.....
.....Or would she?

Chapter 5 by Carlos del Castillo

"Drop the charade, you know I was there!" he says with vehement anger.

"All you had to do is keep your head down!, you had two years left and this would have been all over." he says as what look like tears start to well up in his eyes.

"I know, I know, I just had enough of that woma... wait, what? What do you mean 'had'? I ask as I look at him and scan the alley for a means of escape. This isn't going to end well for me I feel.

"I have no choice.."

"Of course you have a choice!" I say to him.

"I am sorry, but I don't" he says regaining his composure.

Chapter 6 by Carlos del Castillo

Twelve years ago, I was a rambunctious little five year old who love her parents with all her heart.

Five days before my birthday, I was saying goodbye to my father who was going on a business trip. I cried cause it was the first time I could remember that I would be away from him for

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As I began to sneak back out of the room, I felt a searing pain that made me yell out and I saw my father flying through the air. His body was limp like a doll and with horror I saw it fall to the ground in all different directions.

I came to days later, on my birthday in fact and learned that what I saw was true, my father was dead. I knew that this was my mother and her lover's doing.

That evening Kaltur came to see me in my room and took me to a walk in the gardens. He explained that he was tasked with disposing of me and replacing me with a look a like.

I cried at the loss of my father and the realization that my mother never loved me as a mother should.

Kaltur began to cry and told me to stop crying and he had an idea.

Two years ago, this memory came back to me. Kaltur had used the help of a magi to suppress my memories and alter my appearance enough so my mother would not recognize me.

Since then I have tried to continue the charade but each day it grew harder and harder to do.

Now my fate rested again in the hands of my friend who seemed to believe we were out of options.

Chapter 7 by Carlos del Castillo



"Yes!, you do! I can run away and hide until it is too late or something!"

"You don't understand Ze, your mother wants you dead and wants proof of your death," he says as he looks around the alley.

"Huh.." I look at him as his eyes look everywhere except for my face.

Maturity and the realization that my own life was about to be cut short made me lose my ability to speak it seems. I can't say anything but my mind is whirling with thoughts.

I could have waited it out, it was only two years. Now my fate has been sealed by my stupidity.

Not only did I open my big mouth, but I also ran to the most secluded place I could find trying to hide, so now no help is near. I am doomed...

To my right, a door pops open and a young man holding two large garbage bags walks out of the doorway. His white apron is drenched in blood. He pauses and looks at us for a second.

"Is everything OK, Miss?" He says as he tosses the bags into a dumpster.

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